GITA
MY RESEARCH AND INTERPRETATION

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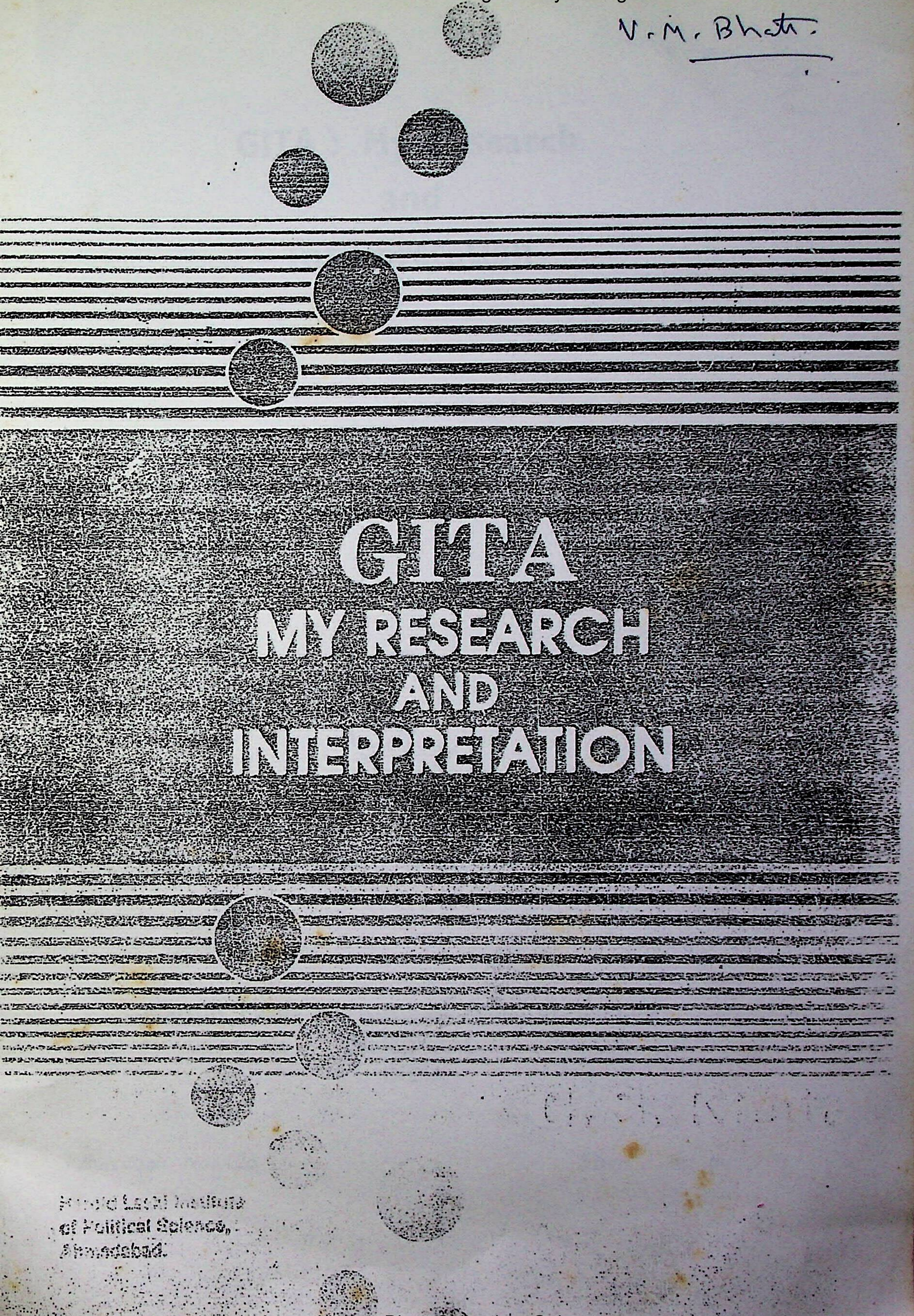
of Political Science,
Ahmedabad

V. M. Bhatt.



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Harold Laski Institute
of Political Science,
Ahmedabad.

GITA : My Research and Interpretation

By

G. S. Khair

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Pune

"शास्त्रप्रयोजनं तत्त्वदर्शनम्" ।

[Realization of Truth is the aim of Science]

Harold Laski Institute of Political Science
AHMEDABAD
INDIA

Publication No. 126 *Price : Rs. 6*

126th Publication of the Laski Institute
© Harold Laski Institute
31 December 1981

Price : Rs. 6 or £ 0·50 or US $ 1.50

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This booklet comprises the lecture delivered by Dr. G. S. Khair in the Socrates Hall of the Laski Institute on 16 November 1980.

The Institute is grateful to Dr. G. S. Khair for preparing this *lecture* for publication.

Printed by : Shri. K. G. Sonar, Lokasangraha Press,
1786 Sadashiv Peth, Pune 411 030

Published by : Mrs. Purnima P. Mavalankar, M.A., Co-Founder,
Harold Laski Institute of Political Science, 'Pragati'
Out-House, Maharashtra Society, Ellis Bridge,
Ahmedabad–380 006

GITA : My Research and Interpretation

I. Diversity in Interpretations

One of the greatest difficulties in understanding the Gita is that an ordinary reader is not able to understand its conclusions without the help of an ancient or a modern interpretation. But there is no agreement among any two scholars about the exact teachings of this small book of 700 verses. Ancient scholars in India interpreted it in diverse ways, and modern Indian, as well as Western scholars also, are not unanimous about the ultimate message of the Poem. *I first listened to the discourses of the late Lokamanya Tilak in 1915, when he published his *magnum opus*, the *Gita-Rahasya*, in which he contradicted the Sanyasa thesis of Adya Shri Shankaracharya. At that time I decided to see for myself, whether the interpretation of Lokamanya Tilak or that of Shri Shankaracharya was faithful to the Gita itself. I read, studied and reflected over the Gita for several years without deciding either way. After 1960, when I was partially free from my life-membership of the Poona Anath Vidyarthi Griha, I decided to carry out a research on the text and interpretation of this Book and published my findings in a Marathi publication, *Moola Geetecha Shodha* (मूळ गीतेचा शोध), in 1967. Its English rendering, *Quest for the Original Gita*, was published in 1969 by Somaiya Publications, Bombay. I give here a short summary of my research and its conclusions. This research helped me in eliciting a coherent and satisfactory interpretation, faithful to the Gita itself.

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*There is a wide divergence of views about the date, authorship, textual structure, philosophy, relation to Mahabharata, original problems, and final message of the Gita. Ancient commentators like Shankara, his predecessors, Ramanuja, Vallabha and Madhwa differed widely over the metaphysics and the place of devotion. Modern scholars like Bhandarkar, Telang, Tilak, Belwalkar, K. M. Munshi, Mahatma Gandhi, Radhakrishnan, Rajgopalachari, Yogi Aurobindo, Dr. Katju, Pandit Seetanath Tatvabhushan, Ranade and others did not agree on the various issues concerning the Gita.

Two centuries have elapsed since the first English Gita appeared in 1785. Next to the Bible, it is the only Sanskrit book translated in most of the languages in the world. *It has been deeply studied and appreciated by English, American and German scholars like A. Weber, Edward J. Thomas, John Davies, F. Edgerton, A. B. Keith, L. D. Barnet, Von Humboldt, A. Halzmanm, E. Hopkins, R. Garbe, R. Otto, M. Winternitz, and several others. A diversity of views about the text and the message of the poem exists even among these foreign scholars also.

*Practically every aspect of the Book has invited controversies. Some critics believe that the Poem is a creation of only one outstanding genius, while others try to prove that the original Poem was a smaller work expanded by one or more later writers. The message of the Poem is equally debatable. Some scholars interpret it as an ethical treatise, while a few maintain that it is a textbook of mysticism and God-realisation. A majority of scholars hold that the Gita teaches a combination of the threefold paths of *karma*, *jnana* and *bhakti*, while others find in it an advocacy of renunciation, or an alternate choice of any one of the three paths. The problem of date is also scholarly debated ; on the evidence of astronomical references in the Mahabharata, some investigators assign to the Poem a period as ancient as 3000 B.C., while a few Western scholars find it comparatively modern, viz, about the third or fourth century A. D.

The Bhagavad-Gita is a unique case of a Poem which is very small and yet very controversial. Many critics hold that the dialogue form of the Poem is responsible for the diversity of interpretations. This problem of differences of views about the text and the message of the Gita has been a problem of my study for many years. I felt that the Poem was written in a period when philosophy, metaphysics, psychology, logic, polemics and ethics were sufficiently advanced for the creation of a book with a unity in thought and a definite message. What can be the explanation for the confusing structure ? The Gita is pre-eminently a book which embodies the fundamental principles which have guided the lives of great writers, poets, kings, politicians, saints and the common people of India. When we present it before the whole world as our philosophy of life and society, are we ourselves agreed unanimously on the teachings of the Poem ? How can a book which is so controversial about its form and content guide the life of individuals and societies ? There must be a single definite message of the Gita, systematically argued and supported by relevant logic. This feeling has prompted me to study, first the nature of the text, and then the arguments and concepts that lead to the ultimate message of the Gita.

II. Problems for Solution

I DISCUSSED with many friends who were quite familiar with the Gita, whether they were able to make out a coherent and consistent philosophy from their reading of this Poem. Most of them answered in the negative. *I found that they read this book for the sublime and devotional ideas that are scattered throughout the Poem, but could not make out a total picture out of the scattered concepts. I myself was in the same position for fortyfive years since I began reading the Gita in 1920. Therefore, I decided to analyse the Poem and study it from as many different angles as possible. In the beginning there was no definite hypothesis for this research. I was not sure what would emerge out of my study. But I had my problems and difficulties which prevented me, like many others, from easily grasping a consistent line of argument and thought.

Some of these problems were as follows :

1. Changes in terminology for the same concept in different chapters, e.g. *buddhi* (बुद्धि) and *prajna* (प्रज्ञा).
2. Alternative terminology for concepts in the same chapter or paragraph. प्रकृति–पुरुष, क्षेत्र-क्षेत्रज्ञ; viz, in XIII.
3. Meaning of the same term differs in different contexts, e.g. ब्रह्मन्, पुरुष, स्वभाव.
4. Absence of familiar terms for certain concepts—e.g. आत्मा in II–18 to 30.
5. Different terms used for the Supreme Being—ब्रह्मन्, ईश्वर, परमात्मा, etc.
6. Krishna referring to the Supreme Spirit some times in the third person singular and some times in the first person singular. e.g. मुनिः ब्रह्म गच्छति । माम् एति ।

7. Repetition of the same topics; संन्यास, यज्ञ, ज्ञान-विज्ञान, etc.
8. Classifications of human nature in terms of सत्त्व, रज, तम in XIV and दैव – आसुर in XVI.
9. Identical descriptions of ideal persons,—स्थितप्रज्ञ, तत्त्वविद्, भगवद्भक्त, गुणातीत, etc.
10. New ideas, apparently unrelated, are inserted in the discussion, e.g., III 30 to 32.
11. Apparent absence of structural unity and symmetry in many chapters ; e.g. XIII. Unrelated matter appears in the beginning, or middle or at the end, e.g., XIV 1 to 4.
12. The original sequence of verses in some chapters appears to be altered, e.g., XIII about क्षेत्र-क्षेत्रज्ञ.
13. Problems are raised but not directly answered, e.g., संकर in I.
14. Proportion of grammatical errors differs in various chapters.
15. Use of adjectives like उदासीन, अनिकेत, निराश्रय, पुत्रदारगृहादिषु अनभिष्वङ्ग: raising doubts about the ultimate message of कर्म or संन्यास.
16. Difficulties in reconciling contradictory statements, e.g., XVIII 59 and 61.
17. Variety of terminology for मोक्ष, e.g., अमृतत्वम्, दिव्यं पुरुषम्, माम्, परमं धाम, etc.
18. What particular deity is recommended for devotion ? Why ?
19. Was the original dialogue in prose or in verse? If in prose, who versified it ? Which parts are original and which are added later ?
20. What exactly are the problems of Arjuna and what is the definite solution of the Gita ? Why are there differences of opinion among learned scholars on apparently simple issues ?
21. Was there an original smaller text which was enlarged later on by the same or different authors? Or is the present Gita the original one, unchanged for several centuries ?

These and similar questions need satisfactory explanations before a coherent and logical interpretation of the Poem can be attempted. My research was motivated by the desire to find answers to these difficulties. *After the research I was able to find explanations for most of these problems.

III. Tools of Research

I DECIDED to use three resources for my study; the text of the Poem and its detailed and thorough analysis. The related literature on and connected with the Gita; and constant meditation on the unsolved problems.

I first prepared the following charts as tools for my investigation :

1. A loose-leaf notes-pad with the Gita Text pasted on the left side and sufficient blank space on the right for noting my reactions.
2. A chapter-wise analysis of the topics.
3. Analysis of verses in each chapter.
4. Topic-wise chart or map of the Poem.
5. Compilation of repetition of the topics.
6. Analysis of the descriptions of ideal persons.
7. Compilation of religious practices.
8. Theories of cosmic creation and dissolution.
9. A list of significant verses.
10. Probable class of audience of the Poem the author had in his mind.
11. Vocabulary of significant words.
12. Grammatical analysis; first person singular and third person singular constructions.
13. Sentences with imperative and potential moods.
14. Lists of proper names and adjectives used for Krishna and Arjuna.
15. A classification of important concepts and ideas.
16. Words and concepts denoting ultimate goals of life.
17. Classification of vocabulary and concepts according to probable authors.

18. Grammatical deviations in each chapter and in the probable groups of chapters.
19. Peculiarities of probable authors.
20. Probable divisions of the Gita.
21. The Original Gita and the two probable redactions.

There was no plan for all these charts in the beginning; *I went on preparing them as and when I needed them for my further investigation. As I went on preparing the charts and studying them, vague inferences gradually emerged out of them, and in order to verify, discard, confirm or finalise them, I prepared further charts of classification and ultimately arrived at tentative conclusions.

Then I consulted other related literature to see how far it supported or contradicted my conclusions. This was a very general study only with reference to my thesis ; it was not an intensive study.

For this study I used the following sources :

1. The Mahabharata. 2. The Bhagawata Purana. 3. Other Gitas like the Ganesh Gita, the Uddhava Gita, etc. 4. The old Upanishads. 5. The Darshanas, especially Sankhya, Yoga and Vedanta. 6. Ancient history of India. 7. History of Indian literature, philosophy and religion. 8. Some commentaries, criticisms and translations of and on the Gita.

*The third tool that immensely helped my study was constant reflection and introspection on the Gita text itself, (which I knew by heart) and on the various analytical charts that I had prepared. The tentative conclusions drawn through introspection were tested on the objective data provided by the analytical charts. Thus this research is a composite result of textual analyses, related literature and subjective contemplation.

IV. Tentative Hypothesis

THE TOOLS of investigation which were prepared earlier yielded certain tentative conclusions and suggested the direction for further investigation and the preparation of necessary research instruments. I shall, therefore, summarise these primary inferences which lead to a sort of hypothesis for this research and then proceed to describe other classifications and charts.

1. Extension of chapters : Some chapters appear to have concluded ; but some additions are made to it in a different terminology and language, e.g., II 53 to 72; XIV 21 to 27.
2. Terminology : New terminology for earlier concepts appears in later chapters; the connotation of earlier terms undergoes changes in the later chapters, e.g., प्रकृति, अव्यक्त, ब्रह्मन्, etc.
3. Diversity in terminology : The idea of *moksha* or liberation is expressed in a variety of ways in different chapters and groups of chapters, e.g., योगयुक्तो ब्रह्म गच्छति । मद्भावम् आगताः । पदम् अव्ययम् तत् ।, etc.
4. Perfect individuals : Descriptions of ideal persons appear to be added afterwards and identical attributes are repeated, e.g., स्थितप्रज्ञ in II, ब्रह्मविद् in V, गुणातीत in XIV, etc.
5. Synoptic verses : In each of the sextets (group of six chapters) there are synoptic verses in which the role of कर्म, ध्यान, ज्ञान and योग is expressed in different ways, IV 41, XIII 24, and XII 12.
6. Change in the sequence of verses : The order of verses in some chapters appears to have been altered, and *Vedantic* verses inserted in between *Sankhya* paragraphs, e.g., XIII 19 to 23. Similarly, the original places of verses referring to क्षेत्र-क्षेत्रज्ञ and प्रकृतिपुरुष seem to have been changed in. XIII.

The above-mentioned analyses and classifications suggest that there may have been more than one author who added more portions to the Gita and made some changes in the original Text. In order to determine whether or not there have been more authors, further investigation was made. *A hypothesis of multiple authorship of the Gita was suggested by the study carried on so far.

V. Three Stages of the Poem

The Gita is a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna in which reference to the Supreme Being is made both in the third person singular as, तत्, सः, etc., as well as in the first person singular as, अहम्, माम्, मया, etc. In the first and third sextets, both types occur. But in VII, IX, X, XI & XII only the first person pronouns occur in all their declensional forms as, अहम्, माम्, मया, मत्तः, मयि, etc. I made separate groupings of poems in the first and third sextets with regard to this two-fold grammatical use, and studied the chapters separately, eliminating the first and the third person verses alternately. The result was surprising and revealing.

*In I to VI ; when the 'I and Me' references were eliminated, the remaining portion stood as a self-sufficient complete thesis on a comparison between *Sankhya* and *Yoga* philosophies, and an attempt at a reconciliation between the two schools. The remaining 126 verses, even after eliminating 154 verses from a total of 280, did not suffer from a unity and logical continuity of the composition. The same fact was revealed in the last sextet also. If 96 verses, which are in first person singular, are omitted from a total of 215, the remaining 119 verses appear to have a perfectly meaningful logical sequence. The verses in the third person explain the doctrines of *Sankhya*, and show their application to various aspects of human life. These remaining portions of the first and the third sextets are both based on *Sankhya*, and the third sextet appears to have supplemented the first sextet with reference to that ancient philosophy.

*In the middle or second sextet, all the references to God by Krishna are in the first person singular. They are not interrupted by the third person singular verses. But in the first and third sextets the majority of the third person verses are interspersed by the first person singular verses. This suggests that the first and third sextets are expanded by the author of the middle (second) sextet, who has composed his portion with the use of the first person pronouns. *This positively indicates an additional author who makes Krishna speak as God in the first person singular. The Gita has at least two authors, and has been enlarged at least by one additional author. He has taken the utmost care and pains to unify his portions with the original text, and has succeeded in this task to a remarkable extent. This is an admirable and unique achievement in the history of ancient literature ! But in this attempt, subtle contradictions have crept in, which commentators try to explain without any unanimity in their views. The whole Poem has an outward appearance of unity, but discloses contradictions on critical scrutiny. This thesis can explain the cause and nature of contradictions, but cannot remove or dissolve them. They have to be accepted as a fact.

The next problem to be tackled was whether the remaining portions of the first and third sextets are the creation of one author or more. To solve this problem, further analyses and classifications were undertaken by devising other appropriate tools for investigation. A detailed analysis of vocabulary, terminology, concepts, style, presentation, linguistic peculiarities, etc., suggested that the first and third sextets must have two separate authors.

*The analysis of the factors such as the use of proper nouns and adjectives, exhortatory conclusions, the war atmosphere, wording of the ultimate message, new terminology, change in the meaning of terms, probable audience the author had in his mind, attitude towards opposite views, and over-all impressions created after repeated reading of the relevant portions led me to the conclusion that there are three authors of the Gita.

The first author of the Original Gita composed six chapters containing 126 verses ; the second one added six more chapters containing 119 verses. The third one who came last changed the whole structure of the Poem. *He shifted the portion of the second poet to the third sextet, and inserted his six chapters in between the compositions of the first and second authors. He also added 154 verses to the 126 verses of the first author, and 96 verses to the 119 verses of the second author. These additional verses were inserted at various points in each chapter according to the relevance of the topics. The consequence was a mixture of the compositions of the three authors with their own peculiarities of terminology, concepts, style, presentation and philosophy.

VI. Scrutiny of Peculiarities

A BROAD division of the Gita into two major sections, on the basis of the first person singular was comparatively easy, and can be verified by anyone who reads the remaining portions, eliminating the 'I and Me' verses. But further careful scrutiny was necessary for ascertaining whether the remaining portions are by one, two or more authors. Such a scrutiny is also necessary for allocating definitely and conclusively chapters, paragraphs and verses to the first, second or third stages and authors.

1. **Use of proper nouns and adjectives** : In the first sextet Arjuna addresses Krishna by a limited number, about 10, of proper nouns. In the second sextet there is a rich variety, about 30, of names attributed by Arjuna to Krishna. But in the third sextet the use of such names is very limited.

2. **Exhortatory conclusions** : Since the purpose of the Poem was to inspire Arjuna to action, the use of imperative and potential moods was necessary. How this is used in the three sections demonstrates the individuality of each author. The first author repeatedly exhorts Arjuna to pursue *yoga* and be a *yogi*. The second one uses a rich variety of phrases to inspire Arjuna to fight, to be *yoga-yukta* and to resort to Me (God). The third author uses very few such phrases ; he only repeats, 'listen, know, understand', etc.

3. **Battle-field atmosphere** : The third author of the middle (second) sextet has kept alive the war atmosphere, more than the first and the second authors.

4. **The ultimate message** : Commentators of the Gita are sharply divided on the ultimate message of the Poem. A scrutiny of the three divisions indicates that all the three authors agree on the final message but its form, expression and wording differ in each case. Yoga is expressed in different terms. In the first sextet the messa ge is, Be a *yogi* '. In the second sextet of the third author it is, 'Be my devotee'. In the third sextet it is 'Resort to *sattva*' (सत्त्व) qualities and go beyond them. The substance and the meaning are, however, the same, i.e., '*yogic* attitude towards life'.

5. **Evolution of terminology** : Terminology grows according to the evolution of concepts. We find that concepts and terminology gradually develop during the three stages.

The first two stages (first and third sextets) use the *Sankhya* terms, while the third stage (second sextet) uses both *Sankhya* and *Vedanta* terms. The concept of a personal God and devotion to Him do not occur in the first two stages, but only in the third stage.

6. **Meaning and substance of terms :** The words *dharma-adharma* (धर्म-अधर्म) do not occur in the first stage ; they occur only thrice in the second stage but repeatedly several times in the third stage. The connotation of the terms also differs in different contexts, e.g., कुलधर्म, जातिधर्म, धर्मसंमूढचेताः, धर्मसंस्थापना, योग-धर्म, भक्ति-धर्म, त्रयीधर्म, सर्वधर्मान्, etc.

7. **Expected audience and readers :** The first two authors address their discourse to the educated and learned audience and philosophers as ज्ञानी, पंडित, मुनी, यती, etc. But the third author has in his mind all classes and sections of society, ब्राह्मण, क्षत्रिय, वैश्य, शूद्र, स्त्रियः सुदुराचार, विद्या-विनय-संपन्न, श्वपाक, अविद्वांसः, अज्ञाः, लोकः, जनः, etc.

8. **References to opposite views :** The nature and temperaments of the three authors is best illustrated in their references to their contemporary opponents. The first writer is very tolerent and lenient to those who differ from him, calling them, बालाः, अविद्वांसः, अज्ञाः, etc. The second author (third sextet) rarely refers to opposite views; when he does it, he is very polite and impersonal and refers to them as, एके, अपरे, मनीषिणः, कवयः etc., The third author (second sextet) shows no mercy to those who differ from him. He uses the most ruthless and powerful vocabulary in condemning them in such words as, नराधम, अल्पबुद्धि, नष्ट, विभ्रान्त, मदान्वित्, आसुराः, etc.

9. **References to** *Yajna*, *deva-devata* and *Vedas* (**यज्ञ, देवदेवता and वेदाः**) : The first author gives a broad definition of *yajna* (यज्ञ) including in it ritualistic as well as self–purifying activities (IV 28) ; the second author insists upon traditional rites and rituals (XVII 11–13). The third author (middle sextet) defines यज्ञ as जपयज्ञ and relegates the ritualistic rites to a subordinate place. Similarly, the first two authors treat the देव-देवताs and Vedas reverentially while the third one treats them very critically, as very subordinate to Me, the One God.

The purpose of my investigation was to resolve the difficulties in the way of a satisfactory and unanimous interpretation. The possibility of multiple authorship emerged as a by-product of this study on its own. *It was not my original aim to prove the plurality of writers. When the problem arose, more analysis and study was necessary to throw more light on the authenticity and nature of authorship. In the absence of direct external evidence, a study in depth of the text itself in all possible ways was the only method to resolve the problem. Therefore, the externa and the interna of the text was analysed in various ways.

VII. Style, Exposition and Diction

GREAT WRITERS possess certain peculiarities and individualities in exposition, style and diction, which differentiate them from other writers. This criterion was applied in the case of the three contributions to the Gita also.

1. Expositional peculiarities: The exposition of the original author is extremely logical and rational. The argumentative part of the whole Gita appears only in the first sextet of the original author. His arguments and conclusions follow a system of logic. He clearly states the position of the disputant, namely *Sankhya*, discusses the pros and cons of the topic, indicates his points of agreement and difference, and points out the conclusions of both ; e.g., II 26–28, and III 3–8. The first poet compares *Sankhya* and *Yoga*, admits the good points of *Sankhya* and agrees with them to that extent, e.g. III 4, V 4 and XVIII 49. Out of the same Kapila philosophy, the *Sankhyas* arrive at the conclusion of *Sanyasa*, while the Gitakar's conclusion is *Karmayoga*. The metaphysical ground is common but the ethical conclusions are diametrically opposite! He starts to explain the *Yoga* stand-point in II 39, deals systematically with the main points in each chapter and concludes his discourse by a verse with the conclusion 'Therefore, be a *yogi*'; VI 46. The insertions of verses by the third author at different points in each chapter, with his insistence on faith (श्रद्धा), have clouded the logical, rational and systematic arrangement of the original Gita.

The second author (**third sextet**) maintains a sort of personal aloofness and objectivity. He set before himself the task of supplementing the original Gita by a systematic presentation of *Sankhya* doctrines applicable to *Yoga*, and by showing their applications to the various aspects of human life and activities. Analysis, classification, objective presentation, application and description are the special features of the second sextet of the Gita. It is in continuation with the first sextet, though later on interrupted by the third sextet in the final redaction.

The third author of the middle (second) sextet is entirely different from his two predecessors. He is personal, emotional, dogmatic, assertive, intolerant, and hypnotical. Rather than on logic, reason and objective presentation, he relies on assertion and emphatic repetition and demands implicit faith and loyalty from his audience. He tries to convince not by rational logical argument but by faith, mysticism, divinity, supernatural powers, terror, admiration, illusion, divine forms, and awe-inspiring visions. He uses mass-psychology with insight and skill. His watchword is faith (श्रद्धा), implicit and unquestioning faith. All the power, fervour and self-confidence of a prophet, of one who identifies himself with God, of one who himself is God, are reflected in this composition of the third author (3rd stage but second sextet). This whole composition is sentimental, emotional, faith-inspiring, vigorous, assuring and persuasive. It has the conviction of a mission behind it. This composition quantitatively and qualitatively dominates the whole Poem. It overshadows the first two compositions of the earlier two authors.

Style of the three compositions: The difference in the literary styles of the three composers is also remarkable. The subject-matter of the first author is a comparison between *Sankhya* and *Yoga*. Therefore, he follows the style of logical argumentation. Simplicity, force, brevity and directness are the main features of his style. In the case of the second author (third sextet), we do not find any special feature of literary style. His composition is for conveying the *Sankhya* theory and suggesting the methods for its practical application. It is as good as prose.

In contrast to the first two authors, the third poet is pre-eminently a prophet, philosopher, poet, preacher, missionary, and eloquent orator—all combined in one personality—an outstanding achievement, indeed ! He is a master of literary style and a creative genius in diction. He never falters for words. There is fluency, rhythm, grace and elegance in his style. But when the occasion demands his verse becomes harsh, severe and devastatingly incisive. Similes and metaphors abound in his composition. The most sublime passages constantly chosen by devotees of the Gita for daily recitation are from the composition of this author, e.g., XV; XII 13 to 20, etc.

This poet is carried away by his pious sentiments. Consequently, he does not always stick to his topic. There is a jumping from idea to idea, and repetitions are numerous. They are intentional, for the purpose of effect on the common people. He convinces his readers not by rational and logical argument, but by forceful dogmatic statements, demanding implicit faith. " Those who have faith in Me will be saved, those who ignore Me will perish "; III 31–32. *But whatever topic he touches is endowed with a sublimity, piety and sacredness not achieved by his predecessors. His verse is fluent, chaste, rhythmic, mellifluous, assuring and apparently convincing.

This author reaches the highest peak of poetic imagination in XI of the Universal Vision. It is a masterpiece of metaphysical poetry. This poet has a unique gift of illustrating abstract ideas in concrete terms. Many passages from his pen are chosen for quotations by standard authors, e.g., IV8,9.XI 12.

Diversity in diction and vocabulary : A general analysis of the externa and interna of the Gita gives a broad impression of the contribution of the three authors and their probable portions. Separating the portions of the first and second authors was an easy task, because the second merely added to and supplemented the previous text without tampering with it. *But the third author not merely added his chapters to those of the first two composers but inserted verses and paragraphs at different points in the compositions of both the first and second authors in the first and third sextets. Identifying these verses and paragraphs was a difficult task. I decided to study the vocabulary and diction of the whole text in order to determine the peculiarities, individualities, preferences and specialities of each author in the choice of words and phrases.

I listed the important words and phrases under six categories : (1) philosophy and metaphysics, (2) spiritual and religious practices, (3) ethics and morals, (4) ultimate objectives in life, (5) adjectives and attributes, and (6) peculiar words.

On a careful study of this classified vocabulary, it was evident that there is a gradual addition of new words and new concepts at each successive stage. The same concepts are expressed in new terms as the text progresses in the three stages. *Then there are certain peculiarities and phrases that occur often and suggest the preferences of the different authors. The different forms of युज् are used liberally by the first author. The second one always makes a cumulative mention of यज्ञ-दान-तप in his composition. The third author repeats the words such as, धर्म, गूढ, रहस्य, अध्यात्म, ईश्वर, महेश्वर, सर्वलोकमहेश्वर, पुरुषोत्तम, etc. This study thus clearly indicates three periods and three authors.

Grammatical deviations : A careful study of grammatical errors in the three probable portions indicates individual peculiarities. If only serious errors are taken into account the figures for the first, second and third sextets are 3, 0 and 28 repectively. The first author occasionally commits errors, the second is very careful and the third one takes full liberty. What he loses in grammar, he amply makes up in the wealth of diction, beauty of style and sublimity of ideas.

VIII. Concepts in the Three Divisions

On the basis of the evidence supplied by the analysis of the Gita in the various ways discussed above, I arrived at a conclusion of three possible divisions of the text and their probable authors as follows:

First and Third authors :—I to VI.

Second and Third authors :—VIII, XIII to XV, XVII and XVIII.

Third author only :—VII, IX to XII and XVI.

*The first and the third sextets are interspersed with interpolations, while the second sextet is by the third author only. In order to allocate the verses and paragraphs to the different authors, a detailed analytical study of the contents of the text was undertaken.

Evolution of philosophical concepts : The original portions of the first author in I to VI deal with two schools of philosophy, the *Sankhya* of Kapila and the *Yoga* of the Upanishads. The ideas of *karma*, *jnana*, *dhyana*, and the problems of sin, sorrow and ethics are discussed. The third author, by his interpolations in this first sextet, introduced the concepts of *dharma-adharma*, human incarnation of God and His purpose, *Vedanta*, and the path of devotion. The second author explained the *triguna* doctrines of *Sankhya* and their applications in life. The third author, in the middle sextet, introduced the metaphysics of *Vedanta*, and suggested its fusion with *Sankhya* and *Yoga*. He emphasised mono-deism (एकेश्वर) and the principles of devotion (*bhakti*). He also interpolated some verses in the chapters of the second author of the third sextet.

Ultimate goals of life : Like all other ancient scriptures all three agree on *moksha* as the ultimate goal, but the concept differs in the three philosophies of *Sankhya*, *Yoga*, and *Vedanta*.

The practice of religion : *Yajna* formed a major part of religion during the Gita age, but the concept differs during the three periods of the Poem. The attitude of the third author towards the *Vedas* and *Vedic* Gods and Godesses is entirely different from that of the first two authors. He is critical about the orthodox and traditional views.

The concept of bhakti : The first author makes no mention of *bhakti*, the second mentions it only once, but the third author makes it the central message of his teaching.

The philosophy of karma : The three philosophers agree on *Karma Yoga* as an instrument of *Yoga*, but the language and terminology of the three is entirely different. The content of *karma* also differs in each stage.

The idea of sanyasa : The first author gives subordinate place to *Sanyasa*; the second one changes its concept to include *yajna*, *daana* and *tapa* as obligatory; and the third regards god-devoted action as the best *sanyasa*.

Cosmological concepts : Ideas about the emergence and dissolution of the universe are based on *Sankhya* theory in the case of the first two authors; the third author relies on the *Vedanta* theory and tries to combine it with the previous *Sankhya* concepts in the Poem.

The Soul and the Supreme Being : The terminology for the universe, the Soul and the Supreme Being has undergone immense changes during the three periods. The first two authors follow the *Sankhya* metaphysics, but the third one follows the *Vedanta* concepts and tries to reconcile *Sankhya* concepts with his *Vedanta* theories.

Forms and objects of worship : The symbols used for worship and the ways of worship undergo a gradual change during the three periods. There is a gradual transition from the *Vedic* deities representing cosmic powers, to mythological idols. Sacrificial offerings have been replaced by simple offerings such as water, fruits, flowers and leaves. The chanting of *Vedas* has given place for meditation, *kathas*, *keertans*, *japa*, salutations, etc.

Death, rebirth and immortality : The undesirability of the birth-death cycle and the idea of re-birth is accepted by the three authors. But there is a diversity of views with regard to the mode of final departing of the soul from the body and its status after death.

Sin and sorrow : The ideas are common to all the three authors but the terminology differs with each author. This gives a clue for the location of verses to different periods; *papa-punya* and *dharma-adharma* terms dominate during the third period.

Psychological concepts : It is not realised that the Gita has devoted great attention to the states of the mind and the psychology of life in general. The second author bases his psychological analysis on the three qualities of *prakriti* (त्रिगुण विभाग) and the third author prefers to group human characters and their actions in a dual classification of *daiva* and *aasura* (दैव, आसुर). XIV, XVII and XVIII of the second author and XVI of the third author deserve study for this point. The Gita has made reference to at least 150 states of the mind (मनोवृत्ती) with their opposite moods and tendencies.

Free will and fate : Man is partly free and partly dependent, is the main postulate of the Gita. But the three authors differ with regard to the way and the proportion of this dependence and the language in which the principle is expressed. The first two authors are more realistic, rational and analytical, and the third one leans more towards divine dispensation and pre-determinism.

Addition of new concepts : The third author has introduced new concepts in his portion of the Poem, in addition to those used by the first two authors, as will be seen from the frequency of their use, e.g., अहिंसा (3), कीर्ति-अकीर्ति (4), अध्यात्मम् (4), अभ्यास (4), ईश्वर (6), काम-क्रोध (5), काम (20), जन (8), तेजस् (5), दान (5), दिव्य (8), द्वन्द्व (5) निर्द्वन्द्व (2), नमस्-कृ (6), बलम् (7), भक्त-भक्ति (17), भज् (13), ज्ञान-विज्ञान (4) विभूति (20), सर्वभूत (4), धर्म-अधर्म (20), पाप-पुण्य (16), and so on.

*The number and variety of diversities in content, ideas and concepts, found in the three probable divisions and stages of the Gita confirm the plurality of authors and the probable stages of development in the total composition of the Gita. They also suggest that the additions may have been made in different periods reflecting the contemporary philosophies, problems and beliefs.

IX. Evidence from external sources

AN ATTEMPT was made to see whether any external evidence was available either to support or contradict the possibility of accretion to the original Gita by subsequent authors.

The Mahabharata : Scholars who have carefully studied the Mahabharata have accepted the theory that it has passed through more than three stages, viz, the first consisting of 8800 verses, the second of 24,000 verses, and finally the text of 100,000 verses. There is direct or indirect reference to the Gita in all the first three phases. The changes in content that have occurred in the Mahabharata are also reflected in the three stages of the Gita. In the first two stages of the Mahabharata, Krishna is shown as a human being, a friend, philosopher and guide of Arjuna, a great statesman, a warrior and a leader. In the third stage of the Mahabharata he is depicted as an incarnation of God, Brahma and the Supreme Being. These changes are reflected in the Gita also.

In the earlier stages of the Mahabharata reference is made to only two philosophic systems, *Sankhya* and *Yoga*, both respected by the author. नास्ति सांख्यसमं ज्ञानं नास्ति योगसमं बलम्। तौ उभौ एकचर्यौ तौ उभौ अनिधनौ स्मृतौ । शांतिपर्व 316·4

The first two stages of the Gita are also based on the *Sankhya* and *Yoga* philosophies. वेदान्त, mono-theism and mono-deism, the concept of अवतार, or divine incarnation, were added to the Mahabharata in the third stage. The same is reflected in the Gita also.

There are other newer concepts which occur at a later stage, both in the Mahabharata and the Gita; e.g., *ahimsa, swarga-naraka, papa-punya, dharma-adharma*, idol worship, Vivaswan-Manu tradition, atmosphere of war, *vishwa-roopa-darshana* (vision of the Universal Spirit), lament over moral degradation of society, etc.

The first three stages of the Mahabharata are ascribed to Vyasa, Vaishampayan and Souti. Their views on *yajna, Vedas, Vedic* deities, family and caste traditions, the four classes in society, etc., are reflected in the Mahabharata as well as the Bhagawad-Gita. Thus the Mahabharata positively supports the three tiers of the Gita and their triple authorship.

The Upanishads and the Gita : Students of the Upanishads have established a chronological order in the ancient, later and the new available texts. For comparison with the Gita, I have arranged them in the following three categories, maintaining their chronological order.

(1) बृहदारण्यक, छांदोग्य, केन, ऐतरेय, तैत्तिरीय, कौषीतकी, ईश and कठ.
(2) मुंडक, श्वेताश्वतर, महानारायण, प्रश्न, मैत्री and मांडुक्य.
(3) The new Upanishads like जाबाल, परमहंस, शुबाल, गर्भ, etc.

The Upanishads in stage (I) were confronted with problems which are also reflected in the first stage of the Gita—e.g. *yajna-karma* or *jnana*, *karmakanda* or *brahmavidya*, *vidya* or *avidya*, *karma* or *sanyasa*, secular life or spiritual pursuit, etc.

The topics discussed by the Upanishads in the second period and the Gita in the second stage are also common, e.g., elements in the universe, advanced practices in *yoga*, the path of devotion, concepts of moral life and advanced concepts of *Sankhya*.

During the third period, the new Upanishads have some common features which are also reflected in the third stage of the Gita ; e.g., devotion to a personal God, the concept of a Supreme Being over and above matter and spirit, but containing and pervading the two (क्षर पुरुष, अक्षर पुरुष, पुरुषोत्तम). Some other special features common to the new Upanishads are also the peculiarities of the third stage Gita, e.g., graceful, refined and metaphorical style ; intense devotion to a deity like, विष्णु, नारायण, रुद्र, शिव,

वासुदेव, etc., vivid descriptions and moral qualities of ideal persons who attained spiritual perfection; and an attempt at integrating the existing theories of *Sankhya, Yoga, Vedanta* and *Bhakti* into a new synthesis.

*The above comparison leads to the conclusion that the Gita also reflects the three chronological stages of the Upanishads.

Concordance of words and concepts : A study of the chronological order in which significant terms occur in the three periods of the Upanishads discloses that many new words and concepts occurring in the third stage of the Gita appear first in the later Upanishads and not in the earlier ones when those concepts were not common. A few such terms occurring only in the third stage of the Gita are—

कुलधर्माः, जातिधर्माः, शरणम्, स्थितप्रज्ञ, मुमुक्षु, निर्द्वन्द्व, निर्वाण, वासुदेव, जप, विभूति, पुरुषोत्तम, योगेश्वर, अनिकेत, उदासीन, कूटस्थ, क्षेत्र-क्षेत्रज्ञ, etc.

Systems (दर्शनानि) of Sankhya, Yoga and Vedanta : The important systems of *Sankhya, Yoga* and *Vedanta* are an integral part of the Bhagavad-Gita. Their earlier and later stages of development can be traced in the three stages of the Gita as well as those of the Upanishads. Every system evolves gradually with the development of the prevalent concepts during the preceding consecutive periods. This evolution of the systems can also be traced in the three stages of the Gita.

The first two stages of the Poem (first and last sextets) are based on the *Sankhya* doctrines with regard to its metaphysics and on *Yoga* with regard to its ethics and psychology. *The *Sankhya* ideas of प्रकृति, पुरुष and त्रिगुण are accepted but *Sanyasa* ethics is rejected. The कर्मयोग and ध्यानयोग of योगशास्त्र are fused with *Sankhya* metaphysics. *Sankhya* in the Gita recognised ब्रह्म but the later *Sankhya* disregarded it and tended to be atheistic. To prevent this, *Sankhya* verses are supplemented by theist *Vedanta* verses.

The system of meditation is elementary in the earlier period but well developed during the next two periods as will be seen from VIII 8 to 13.

Theories of Vedanta do not figure in the first two stages but are eloquently stated and illustrated in the third stage (middle sextet). The word *Ishwar* (ईश्वर) does not occur even once in the first and second stages, but in the third stage it is frequently repeated in various forms as महेश्वर, लोकमहेश्वर, etc. *Sankhya* ideas of cosmic creation and dissolution appear in the second stage and *Vedanta* theories in the third stage; VIII 17–19, IX 7–10.

Mythology : The Bhagawata is an important *purana* of *Bhakti* system, in which there is a Gita sermon by Krishna to Uddhava. The origin of this Gita may have some bearing on the Bhagavad-Gita also. Vyasa first composed the Gita with the central theme of नैष्कर्म्य, immunity from the consquences of action or the evil consequences of *karma*; but this did not lead to spiritual solace. Without devotion to Krishna there is no peace of mind. Therefore, he composed the Bhagavata with Krishna devotion as the central theme. This anecdote may have reference to a former incomplete Gita with only the first two divisions discussing renunciation of action, नैष्कर्म्य, and without the third stage giving prominence to *bhakti* (III 4 and XVIII 49). Any way, an incomplete Gita without *bhakti*, must have existed during the earlier period.

In the Ganesh Purana, there is a *Ganesh Gita* of only eleven chapters which suggests its previous model of an existing Gita of only eleven chapters. I am mentioning these facts as interesting coincidences, only indirectly supporting my thesis.

History of religion and culture : Ancient history is divided by historians into three periods ; the first one from 900 B. C. to 600 B. C., the second from 600 B. C. to 300 B. C. and the third from 300 to 200 B. C. *The religious, social and cultural trends during these three periods are reflected in the three successive divisions of the Gita also. This will be evident if we interpret the Gita from a historical point of view. The first division of the Gita is a product of the era which produced Buddha and Mahavir. Their teachings gave prestige to *sanyasa* and monasticism, the trend with which the original Gita had to contend. The reaction to *sanyasa* resulted in a movement towards *yajna-karma* of a ritualistic type which is upheld by the second author in XVII 11–13, and XVIII 3–5. The third period of cultural history is influenced by the creation of personal Gods like Vasudeva, Krishna and Vishnu, temples and idols for them, and the path of devotion. The words *murti* (मूर्ति) and *bhakti* (भक्ति) are prominent in the third-period Gita. A concrete description of Krishna's *murti* appears in XI 10, 11, 17 and 46.

*These external evidences suggest parallel developments in the Bhagawad-Gita, during the three stages of the Poem.

X. Criteria of Interpolations

In order to identify the interpolations made by the third author in the portions of the first author (i.e. the Original Gita) and in those of the second author (3rd sextet), I established the following criteria on the basis of the peculiarities discovered in the original portions of the third author (i.e. the second or middle sextet) which are untampered by any later interpolator.

1. Verses in the name of Krishna suggesting that he is God in a human form, i.e., first person singular statements by Krishna.
2. Peculiar vocabulary of the third author, i.e., गुह्य, दिव्य, दैवी, आसुरी, ज्ञान-विज्ञान, पुरुषोत्तम, वासुदेव, अधिदैव, ईश्वर, महेश्वर, लोकसंग्रह, कुलधर्म, धर्म-अधर्म, संकर, चातुर्वर्ण्य, पाप-पुण्य, etc.
3. The additions of topics such as *bhakti*, denunciation of *aasuri* qualities, descriptions of ideal persons, etc.
4. Concepts, doctrines, terminology, diction and style peculiar to the third author in his unmixed portions of the Poem.
5. Verses giving *Vedantic* form and devotional turn to *Sankhya* and *Yoga* philosophies.
6. Verses suggesting divine incarnation in the form of Krishna.
7. Verses advocating worship and devotion to Krishna.
8. Verses giving advanced stages of *Yoga-shastra*.
9. Emphasis on social aspects, moral qualities and *dharma*.
10. Associating all forms of worship with mono-deism, and devotional mono-theism.
11. Maintaining the battle-field atmosphere.
12. Grammatical deviations.

Identification of the second author : Chapters and verses of the second author could be recognised by applying the following criteria :

1. *Mimansa* approach to Vedas, Deities and *Yajnas*.
2. Details of *Sankhya* doctrines and their application to life.
3. Inclusion of contemporary theories and beliefs.

4. Advanced stage of *Sankhya* and *Yoga.*
5. Objective attitude and personal aloofnees in presentation and exposition.
6. Detailed analysis and classification.
7. Non-reference to battle-field atmosphere and sparing use of the dialogue form.
8. Sparing use of imperative mood and the vocative case.
9. Grammatical accuracy.
10. Simplicity and directness in style and diction.
11. Repetition of certain compound words, e.g., यज्ञ-दान-तप.

On the basis of the above criteria, the interpolations by the second and third authors were taken out and the remainnig portions were read in order to find out whether they showed the characteristics of a coherent thesis or discourse. The following tests were applied in a general way.

1. Each division should have an internal coherence and consistency, and a unity of plan and arrangement.
2. Each division should have a beginning and a conclusion, as far as possible.
3. Each chapter, isolated from interpolations, should have a unity of theme and topic.
4. The whole division should exhibit some purpose related to the main topic and problems in the Gita.

On a careful reading of the three divisions,it was found that they satisfied the tests in a general way. Some chapters appeared to be very small ; but that is in keeping with the text of the Mahabharata, where some chapters have as few as 4 or 5 to 20 verses. The quantitative content of each chapter and each division will be clear from a glance at the accompanying table. *It will show that the first author of the Original Gita wrote Ch. I to VI with 126 verses, to which the third poet added 154 ; the second author supplemented the Original Gita by writing six more chapters of 119 verses, to which the third author added 96 more. Thus the third author interpolated 250 verses at various points in the first and second divisions and added six more whole chapters of 205 verses. Thus the total contribution to the text by each of the three authors was 126 by the first author, 119 by the second and 455 by the third. *The last one has not only quantitatively, but also qualitatively overshadowed the first two compositions,

VERSES IN THE ORIGINAL GITA AND VERSES ADDED BY II AND III AUTHORS

Chapter	Author I	Author III	Total	1st stage Original Gita of Author I and the verses added by Author III
1	21	26	47	1–19, 38–44.
2	24	48	72	1–9, 14–17, 31–38, 40–46, 53–72.
3	24	19	43	17, 18, 20–25, 30–32, 35–41, 43.
4	21	21	42	1–15, 20–22, 34–36.
5	15	14	29	3–7, 18–29.
6	21	26	47	7–9, 13–17, 29–45, 47.
T	126	154	280	
Chapter	Author II	Author III	Total	Author II, Second Stage Gita and verses added by Author III.
8	14	14	28	1–7, 11–16, 21.
13	15	19	34	2, 7–18, 22, 27, 28, 30–32.
14	15	12	27	1–4, 19, 21–27.
15	5	15	20	6–20.
17	25	3	28	1, 5, 6.
18	45	33	78	41–48, 54–58.
T	119	96	215	
		205	205	III Author verses in chapters 7, 9–12, 16.
	245	455	700	I–126, II–119 (T. 245), III–455, Final Text

General objectives and purposes of interpolations : The additions made to the Original Gita by the later two authors were not a wanton literary exercise. They had a purpose consciously kept in their mind. They wanted to supplement the original work by :

(1) Supplying a systematic statement of the relevant doctrines.
(2) By adding the newer concepts of philosophy.
(3) By reconciling the various doctrines and weaving them into an integrated system.
(4) By showing the application of philosophy to the problems of every-day life.
(5) By bringing the message of the Gita within the reach of the common people from the viewpoint of its understanding and practice in life.

Specific objectives of the three authors : The first author stated the problems of the liberation of man from sorrow and sin, and decision of action for the same. He compared the paths of *Sankhya* and *Yoga* and showed his preference for *Yoga*. In II 39 he starts with explaining *Yoga* (योगं शृणु) and in VI 46 concludes by saying, 'Therefore be a *Yogi*' (तस्माद् योगी भवार्जुन).

The second author needed no beginning as he wrote VIII–in continuation of the *yoga* practice in VI and ends by XVIII–53 (ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते), 'he becomes qualified to attain *Brahma*'. He explained the tenets of *Sankhya* in XIII and XIV and showed their application to life in XVII and XVIII.

The third author starts his independent chapters with VII *Jnana-Vijnana* (ज्ञान-विज्ञान) and ends with his concluding peroration, XVIII 63 "Thus I have explained *Jnana*" ; (इति ते ज्ञानम् आख्यातम्). His purpose was to supplement the Gita by the addition of mono-deist theism and devotion on the basis of *Vedanta* philosophy ; and also to raise Krishna to the status of God-hood as in the third stage of the Mahabharata.

*The message of *yoga* of the first author was cast in terms of *sattva-guna* (सत्त्वगुण), *satvic* qualities by the second author, and in terms of intense devotion to a personal concrete God by the third author. His insertions of verses in the compositions of the first and second authors were also made with the same motive. Thus each division has a definite purpose, and a unity of the *Yoga* message is maintained by the three authors, but they used different terminologies for its expression.

The devotional, assuring, forceful, dogmatic and eloquent portion of the third author pervades about two-third portion of the Gita; consequently, the logical and rational presentation of the first author and the systematic arrangement of the second author are not only disturbed, but remained practically unnoticed. The fusion of theistic devotional verses with an entirely different terminology and concepts, creates confusion in the mind of an ordinary reader, and to him the Poem becomes merely a collection of sublime ideas. *The attempt of the third author to synthesise dualistic and naturalistic *Sankhya* with mono-theistic *Vedanta* created confusion among the *Vedanta pandits*, who emphasised only their own views in interpreting the metaphysics in the Gita. All these factors have created the problems and difficulties mentioned in the beginning of this thesis. *An analytical study presented in these pages is intended to contribute to an agreed, coherent, unanimous and simplified interpretation of this highly revered scripture.

XI. Significance of the Thesis

I STARTED to study the Gita in 1920, but for many years did not grasp the interrelation of the ideas and the central message. Many of my friends were in the same position. The commentators presented diverse and opposite views. So I started this research, not with the intention of discovering three authors and their divisions, but in order to thoroughly analyse the text and go to the roots of its meaning. *After this research and pondering over the three divisions in their consecutive order, I was able to better understand the Gita, its coherent philosophy and message. I found the Gita simpler, easier, more practical and useful for the common man as well as the scholar. My thesis was appreciated by persons of research temperament, but criticised by traditionalists. In order to show how this research has helped in simplifying the Poem, I wrote six books on different levels, published several articles and toured the whole of Maharashtra and other states from Pondicherry to Delhi. *My discourses, literature and articles were enthusiastically received by the audience and the readers who found that this valuable book had come within their grasp. All this work has been done from 1967, when my thesis was first published at my age of 70. A famous editor and student of the Gita described my research as "*EPOCH-MAKING*". It has proved to be so in the field of Gita-logy !

The audience of the Gita changes from generation to generation. The older generation reads it with implicit faith, more as a ritual for solace and peace of mind. *The younger generation of today is different. This is a generation and an age of logic, reason, questioning, objectivity, experimentation and intellectual courage. There is ample scope in the Gita to satisfy these very desirable attitudes.

The first and second divisions of the Gita discuss human problems on the basis of *Sankhya* and *Yoga* philosophies which are based on logic, reasoning, laws of nature (*prakriti*) and are free from divine or supernatural interference in human, social, and secular matters. The same philosophy is cast by the third author in a mono-theistic, supernatural and mystic pattern of thought. The reader can accept either the first two rational analytical divisions, or the third division, or all. *The message of the Gita is equally valid for both types of audience, those of reason and those of faith. The first two stages have logic, the third has magic (माया) ! The first two compositions are based on realism and reason ; the third one is based on mysticism and faith.

Some readers may not agree with my theory of three authors belonging to three different periods. To them my request is that, even with their different view in mind, they should read the Gita in the sequence in which I have restructured it. They will find that their understanding of this Poem will be far easier and clearer than before. *The thesis of the three successive divisions and the sequence of development are far more important for understanding the coherent philosophy than the idea of three authors which is immaterial for general understanding.

I have the highest reverence for those past commentators who have sustained, through generations, an interest in the Gita. My desire is to bring this Poem within the reach of the younger generations that they may pass it on to succeeding readers in a new, definite and non-controversial form.

XII. A Definite Interpretation

THE PURPOSE of my research was to remove the difficulties in understanding the Gita and arrive at a single interpretation by removing the confusion inherent in the diverse interpretations of the traditional text. If the text is read in the sequence in which it was composed by the three authors, the message of the Gita becomes clear and self-evident. I have considered the Poem as an independent original composition and not as a pillar of the Philosophical Triad (प्रस्थान-त्रयी) in which restricted form it was understood by ancient commentators. The outline of the Gita philosophy is laid down in the first sextet; it is supplemented by the second author (the third sextet) and again enunciated in terms of *Vedanta* and devotion by the third author, (the second or middle sextet). For the sake of convenience I shall name the three authors as 1. Vyasa, 2. Vaishampayana and 3. Souti, on the basis of the Mahabharata authorship.

The three problems : The Gita starts with the case study of Arjuna, who confronts Krishna with his three problems which are common to all mankind in all ages and places. The war would result in the slaughter of his relatives. This action on his part would bring upon him sin and sorrow instead of goodness (पुण्य) and happiness. He, therefore, wanted guidance for decision on the right choice of action. From the beginning to the end, these three problem, viz, happiness and unhappiness (सुख-दुःख), goodness and sin (पाप-पुण्य) and decision of right action (कर्मनिर्णय), or moral judgement, are kept constantly in mind by the three authors, (XVI 21–24, XVIII 66).

The root of these problems lies in human nature which is a mixture of good and evil tendencies. Man should follow *dharma* and *niti*, but his behaviour is influenced by his good and evil tendencies. To show the nature of these traits, the peculiar characters of Dhritarashtra, Duryodhana, Bheeshma, Arjuna and Krishna are presented in the beginning of the discourse. Selfishness, egoism, rudeness, vanity, narrow views, disregard for human life and social considerations—these are some tendencies in human nature which lead to sin, sorrow and wrong decision or indecision of action.

The yoga solution : The solution of Krishna as presented in the Gita is expressed in three words, योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि (II 48). The main topic and central idea of the discourse is *yoga*; (II 39 and XVIII 75). The *yogic* attitude towards work (*karma*), its motive and results, absolves the doer from the bonds of action, i.e., sin and sorrow, (II 50). *Yoga* is that state of the mind and intellect, in which the undesirable passions and emotions are controlled and gradually eliminated, and the desirable sublime emotions, attitudes and tendencies are cultivated. Craving, anger, egoism, violence, fear, greed, vanity, etc., should be conquered, and in their place love, kindness, fellow-feeling, sacrifice, altruism, tolerence, sympathy, etc., should be cultivated. The resultant state of mind is *Yoga*, which is useful for secular life as well as spiritual attainment (XVIII 53). The *yogi* is always calm, serene, steady, equipoised and unaffected by either favourable or adverse circumstances (XIII 9).

Three paths to yoga : Three paths are absolutely essential for *yoga*; viz, action, knowledge and meditation (*karma-yoga*, *jnana-yoga* and *dhyana-yoga*). They are the ethical, philosophical and psychological aspects of life. Thus there are four important topies viz; *yoga*, *karma*, *jnana* and *dhyana*, discussed in all the eighteen chapters of the Poem. Every topic has a secular aspect for affairs of every-day life, as well as a spiritual aspect for the ultimate goal of liberation from the life-cycle and union with the Infinite.

The metaphysical ideology of *jnana-yoga* is supplied by *Sankhya* philosophy which is accepted by the *Yoga*-school. But renunciation (*sanyasa*) is a point on which the two schools differ. *Sankhya* advocates renunciation while *Yoga* preaches action as being preferable to *sanyasa* ; but allows *sanyasa* only after the attainment of *Yoga* (V–6).

Three presentations: The Original Gita in the first sextet lays down the main outline and principles of *Yoga* philosophy based on *Sankhya* metaphysics. The second author, Vaishampayana, in his third sextet, amplifies the *Sankhya* doctrines of the threefold nature of man in terms of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, (XIV). He explains how this difference in human nature influences the thoughts, emotions and actions of individuals, (XVII and XVIII). The philosophy in the first sextet is thus cast by him in terms of the three tendencies, *triguna-vibhaga*. Thus *yoga* is the *satwik* tendency, *karma-yoga* is *satwik* activity, and *yogi* is the *satwik* person ; (XVII and XVIII). Though the terminology is different, the philosophy is the same. While *Yoga* is explained in terms of activity (कर्म–योग) in the first sextet, the third sextet elaborates the *yogic* or *satwik* tendencies as they appear in all the areas of human life. It mentions several tendencies, attitudes and moods of the human mind not mentioned in the first section. The first and second sextets in their original form made no mention of God (ईश्वर) and devotion. They only mention *Brahma*, which is an ideal and perfect state of the mind to be attained through secular and spiritual *Yoga*, (V 17–19).

The third author, Souti, explains the same philosophy of *Yoga*, *Karma*, *Jnana* and *Dhyana* in terms of *Ishwara* (God) and *Bhakti* (devotion). The central idea of *yoga* is maintained and stongly advocated. But its attainment is made easier for the common man through the help of God and devotion. The abstract and infinite *Brahma* appears as Krishna in the human form to demonstrate to man by His own example how it is possible to practise *yoga* in the affairs of every-day life. Implicit faith in God, constant meditation on Him, un-divided devotion to Him, experiencing his presence in every being—these are the marks of a true devotee and *yogi*. The description of a true devotee in XII 13 to 20, presents a vivid picture of the highly cultured and spiritually advanced *yogi* or *bhakta*, who has eschewed all evil tendencies and developd humane, social and spiritual virtues.

Dedication of all work to God is *Karma-yoga*. Constant meditation on and awareness of Him is *Dhyana-yoga*. The metaphysics of *Vedanta* which affirms the presence of a single, infinite, eternal, imperceptible, omnipresent, omniscient *Brahma* as the source and end of all creation, supplies the ideas of *jnana-yoga* in the second sextet of the third author. These very ideas are interpolated at various points by Souti in the first and the third sextets of Vyasa and Vaishampayana.

Two methods of presentation : *In broad outline, the first sextet describes *Yoga*, and compares it with *Sankhya* ; the third sextet describes man and his life ; and the second sextet describes God and devotion for realising Him. All the chapters and the three sextets discuss the four main topics, *Yoga*, *Karma*, *Jnana* and *Dhyana*, in three different sets of terminologies. In tone and presentation the first and the third sextets, based on *Sankhya* philosophy, are rational, analytical and logical. *Sankhya* gives importance to *prakriti* (laws of nature) in the secular affairs of man. This part of the Gita can be acceptable even to atheists, rationalists, materialists, marxists and non-theist sects. The second sextet of Souti, based on monotheist *Vedanta* and *bhakti*, is dogmatic, mandatory and imperative, demanding absolute faith and complete surrender. This major part of the Gita (455 verses) has practically eclipsed the *Sankhya* sections, (245 verses of the first and third sextets combined), which, in spite of their logical and systematic presentations, have gone unnoticed and un-explained by many commentators.

My research and the interpretation based on the same, will bring to the notice of the readers both the presentations in the Gita, the rational and the imperative. The central idea of *Yoga*, upheld and advocated by all the three authors, will ever remain a unique contribution of the Gita as a guide to humanity in all ages and climes.

□

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—**G. V. Mavalankar**

(From the Visitor's Book of the Institute 15 August 1954)

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"In the years that lie ahead, we shall seek additions to knowledge as worthy as we can make them of the trust that has been confided to us. We shall do that, not with the thought or hope of impressing upon our students any special doctrines or convictions, but as we desire, with the power to live their lives more fully by reason of the ferment created in them. It is our ambition to inspire in them a silent devotion to the great subject we serve. We are still young enough to believe that the service of thought is the noblest calling to which a man can devote himself. We ask to be judged by the measure of our effort to make others think likewise."

—**Harold J. Laski**

From the Inaugural Lecture at the London School of Economics and Political Science, 22 October 1926.